

- 122 -

THE EMBODIMENTS OF THE INVENTION IN WHICH AN EXCLUSIVE PROPERTY OR PRIVILEGE IS CLAIMED ARE DEFINED AS FOLLOWS:

1. A method of buying or selling items having at least one active market, said method comprising the steps of:
 - under control of a client system, displaying information identifying at least one item and a bid/ask price for said item in said at least one active market;
 - specifying transaction conditions based on a user directed position of a moveable icon, said transaction conditions related to the buying or selling of said identified item in said active market; and
 - in response to an action of said user sending a user transaction request at the transaction conditions specified at the time of said action;
 - facilitating a financial transaction for the user in accordance with the transaction conditions to complete the transaction;
 - whereby, the item may be bought or sold by said user at said transaction conditions.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein said step of displaying information identifying at least one item and a bid/ask price for said item in said at least one active market comprises connecting to a source of information for said at least one active market and receiving and displaying at least one said bid/ask price for said item in substantially real time.
3. The method of claim 1 wherein said step of displaying a bid/ask price for said item in said at least one active market comprises displaying said bid/ask price graphically.
4. The method of claim 1 wherein said client system is associated with a server system; said server system includes previously stored user financial account information, and wherein said step of facilitating said financial transaction includes updating the previously stored user information in light of said financial transaction.
5. The method of claim 4 wherein said transaction conditions are based on said previously stored user financial account information as well as said user directed position of said moveable icon.
6. The method of claim 3 wherein said step of displaying said bid/ask price graphically further comprises forming a two-dimensional grid having rows and columns, wherein at least one axis of said grid represents price, and the other axis represents active markets for said item.

- 123 -

7. The method of claim 4 wherein in response to said transaction being completed said client system receives and displays a transaction confirmation for said user.
8. The method of claim 4 wherein in response to said transaction remaining open due to an inability to match said transaction conditions, said client system maintains and displays said transaction for said user.
9. A client system for buying and selling items, said client system comprising:
 - a first display for displaying at least one bid/ask price for at least one of said items in an active market;
 - a second display for displaying transaction conditions relating to the buying or selling of said item based upon a user directed GUI object;
 - and a transaction component that in response to an action of the user, sends a transaction request to a server system at the transaction conditions specified.
10. A method of configuring a user interface for the buying and selling of items, said method comprising:
 - connecting a user interface to at least one source of bid/ask market information for at least one item;
 - displaying, in said user interface, a graphical representation of said bid/ask prices for said at least one item; and
 - revising, in substantially real-time, said graphical representation of said bid/ask prices for said at least one item to visually depict market movement over time of said bid/ask prices of said at least one item.
11. A method of configuring a user interface for the buying and selling of items as claimed in claim 10 further including the step of permitting said user to select additional items for simultaneous graphical representation.
12. A method of configuring a user interface for the buying and selling of items as claimed in claim 10 further including the step of connecting to more than one source of bid/ask market information for said item and simultaneously displaying by said graphical representation additional active markets for said item.

- 124 -

13. A method of configuring a user interface for buying and selling of items as claimed in claim 10 further including the step of providing, in said user interface, a user directed moveable icon for displaying an order for said item, for initiating/modifying trading orders based on the position of said icon relative to the graphical representation and an action of said user.

14. A method of configuring a user interface for buying and selling of items as claimed in claim 13 wherein said icon is moved by said user by being dragged across said interface and said step of initiating/modifying said trading order comprises said user dropping said icon on a preselected cell of said graphical interface.

15. A method of configuring a user interface for buying and selling of items as claimed in claim 10 further including the step of displaying transaction scenarios based on one or more user selected transaction conditions and said user directed position of said icon over said interface.